

Fall 2025 INQ 101-24N: Intellectual & Creative Inquiry

The Edge of What We Know: Inquiry, Creativity, and Discovery in the First Year

Professor Margot Schilpp
Torres

Peer Mentor: Galileah

e-mail: schilppm1@southernct.edu
[@southernct.edu](mailto:southernct.edu)

e-mail: torresg18_

Phone: (203) 671-9605

Office location: Engleman Hall D241

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:00 am – 12:00 pm /
and by appointment

Required Materials:

- 1) Frequent access to Blackboard, our course's electronic learning environment
- 2) Weekly or Monthly Calendar or Date Book (or online calendar)
- 3) University Catalogue (online at Southernct.edu)
- 4) Student Handbook (online at Southernct.edu)
- 5) Additional reading materials—links on Blackboard

About the Course

Inquiry 101 is a seminar designed to guide first-year students toward becoming engaged members of the SCSU community. All INQ classes explore topics related to the meanings of higher education through a focus on the process of “learning how to learn” and cultivating the habits of mind for life-long achievement and success. Students will learn and practice the process of academic inquiry common to all university disciplines, while exploring their reasons for seeking a university education and the choices they make as first-year university students.

Our section of Inquiry 101 will center on “The Edge of What We Know: Inquiry, Creativity, and Discovery in the First Year.” We’ll focus on the intersections between uncertainty and creativity, and we’ll explore how students build connections, how they integrate portions of old selves into new selves, and how they adapt skills they have already mastered to help them gain new skills as they navigate the college experience. Your education is not a passive process thrust on you by others, but a path *you* select and shape according to your own needs and desires. We’ll consider during the semester perspectives that offer you new ways to think about your educational experiences and the choices you have made, are making, and will make in the future.

This section of INQ 101 meets in Engleman Hall, Room A109 from 8:10 am to 9:25 am on Tuesday and Thursday.

Learning Objectives and Outcomes

Students will effectively use inquiry-based learning and information resources to investigate issues related to education and/or learning, reflect upon them,

and form and defend positions.

Students will use reading, writing, speaking, and listening as ways to develop critical thinking, as well as ways to effectively communicate ideas to others.

Students will become familiar with their own study and time management habits and build an effective plan for managing their time and improving their study habits.

Students will be able to identify their own learning styles, as well as the variety of learning and teaching styles of others, including peers and teachers by investigating theories of learning.

Students will begin to learn the connectedness between their general education courses, academic majors, and personal and professional development.

Students will learn how to navigate the offices and systems of the University and access both academic and social supports, as necessary.

Students will have the opportunity to participate in co-curricular, community-based opportunities offered by the University and gain an understanding of the importance of these opportunities in relation to their educational goals and personal development.

Course Requirements

Continued enrollment in this class signifies that you have read, understand, and will abide by the rules set forth in this syllabus.

As a class, we are participating in the FYRE project (and in fact, a significant portion of your final grade in the course derives from assignments that are part of this project). Although the topics and details will be different than in other INQ courses, all of us will be focused on guiding you through the common steps of a university-level research process.

You will collect and analyze data – from the library’s databases, from the web, and possibly also from interviews you do and observations you make. You will then come to some conclusions or findings about your subject and its relation to our course topic (The Edge of What We Know: Inquiry and Discovery in the First Year). Your conclusions will be based on your analysis of the research you’ve done and the data you’ve collected. A couple of times during the term, you’ll give brief, informal presentations to the class as you move toward the completion of your project. After the second round of presentations, we will select two students to submit FYRE projects to a committee who will choose some projects to be included and presented at FYRE Day in December, where students, faculty, staff, and even your family and friends, may see your work.

Individual Reading & Writing-to-Learn (20%)

You will be assigned a variety of reading and writing-to-learn assignments, many of which connect with our course theme or with the FYRE project, and which are designed to test out your thinking, get ideas on the page, and start you in organizing them, including reading assignments, responses to readings, in-class writing, discussion boards, notes, summaries, educational planning and time management work, as well as reflections and self-assessments. You need to complete this work, but often this work will not be “graded” in the traditional sense of assigning it a letter grade. You need to do it anyway, in order to make sure you’re

engaging fully with the ideas of the course.

Projects (30%)

Assignments in the Projects category will ask that you produce and present to the class work that tells a significant story to a larger, targeted audience as part of the FYRE project. The projects can include multimodal approaches and are intended to teach you how to problem-solve and to hone the skills you employ when learning to focus your academic efforts.

Preparation & Participation (30%)

Your regular presence in our class meetings is crucial because the course relies heavily on discussion and group work, as opposed to lecture. More than a couple of absences from our class sessions will affect your final course grade significantly. Attendance does not simply mean to sit silently, however. For full credit here, I mean attendance in the sense of being on time, fully present, attending to the activities and discussions we have, interacting with other students and with me.

Engagement Project (20%)

The INQ Engagement Project will introduce you to opportunities and resources available to set a foundation of success for your first year at SCSU. Your Peer Mentor will have more information about the Engagement Project requirements.

The Engagement Project must be completed by **Thursday, November 20, 2025**.

Presence at our lectures/workshops on Financial Management, Drug and Alcohol Awareness, and Healthy Relationships and Sexual Assault

Students are required to attend the class workshops focused on Financial Management, Drug and Alcohol Awareness and Sexual Assault/Healthy Relationships. (If you miss one of them, you'll need to make sure you make it up by attending/logging into another session or event that the university offers.) Students are expected to write a formal, thoughtful, coherent, proofread and polished one-page response to each of the sessions and upload those responses to the appropriate place on Blackboard.

Policies for Our Class

Attendance/Participation

Come to every class session. You'll want to make sure you arrive to class prepared, which means having read the assignment that's due that day and having written or thought about the ideas we'll be discussing. In order for us to have discussions that are meaningful and valuable, each of you needs to be an *active* participant in our conversations. You won't be able to do this if you haven't prepared by reading the material that's assigned or if you haven't completed the written assignments that are due. **Your success in the class depends on understanding that preparation is critical to the work we're going to do in class.**

Generally, missing more than three or four classes will put you in a position to be less successful than you would probably like. It's possible that we will need to discuss making up work due to illness and/or absences or that we may need to shift our schedule. Please let me know if we need to have a conversation about work you have missed for reasons of illness.

If you must be absent, you'll want to do two things: 1) e-mail me (prior to the absence, if possible) in order to let me know you won't be in class, and 2) find out what you missed from a classmate or from me so that you may be prepared in our next class period.

Assignments/Blackboard Accounts/Blackboard Collaborate/Other Digital Tools

We will use Blackboard as an electronic learning environment. You will drop all of your written work into Blackboard for grading and I will communicate with the class using Blackboard (especially the Announcements page, which I will update each class day). We will spend some time learning how to navigate the space, because I want to make sure you understand how and where to upload your work.

And: you will want to make sure you **regularly and frequently** check your Blackboard and SCSU email accounts. Failure to do so (and perhaps missing a communication about a change in class plans or a reading or writing assignment) **is not** a valid reason not to have completed or submitted an assignment. **Please make sure you keep your password updated and check your account daily.**

There are two other things to remember about written work for this class:

1) **I do not accept late assignments *unless* prior arrangement has been made.** The Blackboard upload spots are set **not** to accept late assignments after the work is 24 hours late, so you'll want to make every effort to submit your work on time. If you do happen to miss a reading response or other assignment, remember that there are multiple categories that make up your final grade, and missing one small section isn't great, but it's not the end of the world, either. As long as it's not a habit, missing a single, small assignment or two should not affect your course grade.

2) **I do not accept assignments via e-mail.** All of your written work must be uploaded to the proper place (and in the proper format) on Blackboard.

Email Communications / Texting

When you email me or your peer mentor, please make sure you identify your class and section in the subject line of the email, along with a brief description of your email's content. For example:

Subject: INQ 101-24N Smith assignment question

Subject: INQ 101-24N Jones absence

Please remember that email to a professor is a type of professional correspondence. You need to address me, state your message or ask your question, and sign your name. Please don't just send some attachment or link and expect that I will know the reason you've sent it.

Electronic Devices

During our class is not the time to text, talk on the phone, FaceTime, surf the web (unless we are using it for research), listen to music, or engage in other activities that will disrupt our ability to form a community of people who are learning in a classroom environment. You should turn off or silence your electronics when you come to our class meetings. I want to foster an atmosphere of respect for the members of the class and the serious work we're going to be doing.

Center for Academic Success and Accessibility Services; Accommodations

The Center for Academic Success and Accessibility Services (CASAS) provides comprehensive support for Southern students. CASAS houses the University's tutoring, writing support services, and PALS as well as academic coaching and programming related to your success in the academic environment.

Additionally, Southern provides reasonable accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, for students with documented disabilities on an individualized basis. If you are a student with a documented disability, the University's Accessibility Services can work with you to determine appropriate accommodations. Before you receive accommodations in this class, you will need to make an appointment with Accessibility Services, located in Buley Library, Rm 303. To discuss your approved accommodations or other concerns, such as medical emergencies or arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment to meet as soon as possible.

First-Year Experience

The First-Year Experience office is located in Engleman Hall C 105. The office supports first-year students as they settle in to navigating the university.

Sexual Misconduct Statement

Southern Connecticut State University is highly committed to providing you with an educational experience that is academically and socially enriching. In line with this mission, we enforce Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972 which prohibits acts of sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, sexual exploitation and stalking) at educational institutions.

To report sexual misconduct students should contact Paula Rice, Title IX Coordinator, Office of Diversity and Equity, at (203) 392-5491 and/or the Office of Student Conduct and Civic Responsibility, at (203) 392-7220, and/or University Police at (203) 392-5375 or 911 for emergencies.

Further information including your Title IX rights and reporting procedures visit the Title IX website at www.southernct.edu/sexual-misconduct and/or the Support and Resource Team (S.A.R.T.) website at <https://inside.southernct.edu/vpas/sart>. For 24/7 Advocacy, please contact the University's Victim Advocate at (203) 687-1252. The Violence Prevention, Victim Advocacy and Support (VPAS) Center, located in Schwartz Hall, room 100, is available for assistance or any questions regarding support and advocacy.

Mental Health and Wellbeing:

Your physical and mental health are critical to your learning and success. Southern has a comprehensive range of supports available to enhance your holistic wellbeing, including the Wellbeing Center, the Food Pantry, Counseling Services,

Health Services, Recreation and Fitness, Alcohol and Drug Services and Recovery Services, and Violence Prevention, Victim Advocacy and Support (VPAS). For more information, please visit **southernct.edu/wellbeing** or call **203-392-7330**.

Daily Schedule

*The following is a **tentative** schedule for the course. It's possible (likely, even) that some things will change as we head through the term, **and I may make alterations to the schedule as necessary.***

You can expect that activities during our class time will vary. We will spend time discussing reading assignments, considering time management, exploring majors and decisions making processes, thinking about ideas relating to our course theme (The Edge of What We Know: Inquiry, Creativity and Uncertainty in the First Year), working in groups, watching or participating in group projects and presentations, and making sure the advising process goes smoothly.

Module 1—Embracing Uncertainty and Creativity

Week 1

T 8/26

In class / Focus for the day:

Introductions; review highlights of the syllabus

Discuss Peer Mentor's role in INQ; Peer Mentor time.

Discuss Engagement Requirements.

5 minute pop-in by Betsy Sanz from Academic Advising

Homework for 8/28:

- Watch "Inside the Mind of a Master Procrastinator" (Tim Urban TED Talk)
https://www.ted.com/talks/tim_urban_inside_the_mind_of_a_master_procrastinator/transcript
- Write **Discussion Board 1 (DB 1)**: a written response to the Tim Urban TED Talk—at least one developed paragraph of your own, and then a response of at least one developed paragraph to a classmate's post). [Post to Blackboard your Discussion Board Response 1 (DB 1) under Module 1→ Discussion Boards→ DB1.] Due 8/28.
- Write **Reading Response 1 (RR1)**, a page or two (double-spaced, typed) that tells me what you think is important for me to know about you. **This is an assignment that only I will read—it won't be shared with the class.** [Post to Blackboard your Reading Response 1 (RR 1) under Module 1→ Reading Responses→RR1.] Due 8/28.

Th 8/28

In class / Focus for the day:

Revisit Introduction to SCSU's technology

Name Cards, Introduction to the Engagement Project, continuing to settle in.

DB 1 due. RR 1 due.

Homework:

None for 9/2, but:

- Read for 9/4:

- Read Jill Suttie's "How Embracing Uncertainty Can Improve Your Life:
https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_embracing_uncertainty_can_improve_your_life
- Write **Reading Response 2 (RR 2)** (written response to the Suttie reading—at least one typed page). [Post your response in the Module 1/ Reading Response folder in Blackboard. Due 9/4)]
- Do you have all your books? Running into any problems? If so, talk to your INQ instructor or email fye@southernct.edu
- Considering adding a course? The **last day to do that is 9/2**, so if you're considering this, talk to your INQ teacher now!

Week 2

Tuesday, 9/2
until 9/8

→Last Day to Add a Course! (Courses can still be dropped or withdrawn from until 11/17)

T 9/2

In class / Focus for the day:

Introduce the FYRE Project
Introduce the Burning Question; FYRE Guide introduction.

Th 9/4

In class / Focus for the day:

Lew DeLuca: Financial Literacy Presentation

RR 2 due.

Homework for 9/8 and 9/9:

- Sign up for a 10-minute meeting with me on either 9/8 or 9/9. Here's the link: <https://signup.com/go/rMpMoYo>
- Read "A Field Guide to Getting Lost: Rebecca Solnit on How We Find Ourselves" (Maria Popov in *The Marginalian*)
 - <https://www.themarginalian.org/2014/08/04/field-guide-to-getting-lost-rebecca-solnit/>
- Write **Discussion Board 2 (DB 2)** (written response to the Popov/Solnit reading—at least two fully developed paragraphs of your own, and a response to a classmate of at least one fully developed paragraph). [Post your response in the Module 1, Discussion Board 2 upload spot in Blackboard. Due 9/9.]
- Need help with a course or managing your time and assignments? Talk to your peer mentor or INQ instructor about the Center for Academic Success and Accessibility Services (CASAS).

Week 3

M 9/8 (not
our usual class
day)

10 MINUTE INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS.

Sign up for a time: <https://signup.com/go/rMpMoYo>

T 9/9

Focus for the day:

No class meeting!

10 MINUTE INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS.

Sign up for a time: <https://signup.com/go/rMpMoYo>

DB 2 due.

Homework for 9/11:

- Work on FYRE Guide/initial research.
- Read “Embrace the Unknown: the benefits of learning to live with uncertainty” (Margaret Heffernan)
<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2023/apr/23/embrace-the-unknown-the-benefits-of-learning-to-live-with-uncertainty>
- Write **RR 3** (written response to the Heffernan Reading—one typed page). [Post your response in the Module 1, Reading Response 3 spot in Blackboard. Due 9/11.]
- **Write a Tentative Burning Question and a sentence or two or three that describes what you intend to discuss during your brief initial FYRE presentation on 9/16 or 9/18.** Upload it to Blackboard before our class time on 9/11. [Find the spot to upload by going to Module 1→FYRE Assignments→Tentative Burning Question Upload.]

Th 9/11

In class / Focus for the day:

the Burning

Discussion of Tentative Burning Questions; Refining

Question & Existing Knowledge;

Galileah Presents: Campus Resources

RR 3 due.

Homework for 9/16:

- Start Time Study (due 9/16)
- Prepare your initial brief (3-5 minute) presentation for FYRE (to be presented 9/16 and 9/18). Make sure you **upload materials by 9/16.**

Module 2—Pushing Toward Wanting to Know More

Week 4

T 9/16

In class / Focus for the day:

FYRE Presentations [upload your FYRE Guide to Module

2→FYRE

Assignments—FYRE Guide for Presentation 1 spot in Blackboard];

Time Study due today [upload before class your Time Study into Module 2→Other Digital Assignments→Time Study spot in Blackboard]; discussion of Time Management.

Peer Mentor time.

Homework for 9/18:

- If you haven't yet presented, be ready to do so on Thursday.
- Need help with your FYRE project? FYRE tutors are available in the FYE office. Use Navigate to schedule an appointment or stop by!

Th 9/18

In class / Focus for the day:

Finish up FYRE Presentations.

Galileah Presents: Time Management and Study Strategies.

Homework for 9/23:

- Don't forget to work on Engagement Requirements.
- Begin revising your Burning Question to upload by 9/25.

Week 5

T 9/23

In class / Focus for the day:

Advising/Explore Presentation by Betsy Sanz from Academic Advising

Begin considering Methodology.

Th 9/25

In class / Focus for the day:

Upload your *refined* Burning Question to Blackboard by the beginning

of class. [Upload your Refined Burning Question to Module

2→FYRE Assignments→Upload Refined Burning Question.]

By 6 pm on 9/25: Upload your answers to items a-g of the FYRE Tasks and

Progress Steps worksheet.

Homework for 9/30, 10/2, and 10/7:

- Make sure you have your refined, edited, and well-considered Burning Question ready to use for our Library exercise on 10/7.
- For an introduction to the Library's resources, make sure that before class on 10/7 you've viewed the INQ 101 FYRE Course Guide (<https://libguides.southernct.edu/fyre>) and are ready to begin working on the assignment posted there, which is due 10/9.

Module 3—Researching

Week 6

TUESDAY, 9/30: Visit the Major and Minor Fair 11-3 ASC Ballroom! (Tentative date)

T 9/30

In class / Focus for the day:

Still settling in / FYRE work

Th 10/2

In class / Focus for the day:

Continue discussing Methodology;
Introduction of Advising Materials, if available now;
Peer Mentor time.

Homework for 10/7:

Continue work on Engagement Requirements.

Week 7

T 10/7

In class / Focus for the day:

Meet at Buley Library lobby.

Presentation by our **Instruction Coordinator/Research**

Librarian, who

joins us for a presentation about Buley Library's resources
Work on the library assignment, due 10/9 in Blackboard.

Homework for 10/9:

- Complete your library assignment, due 10/9.

Th 10/9

In class / Focus for the day:

Continue discussing Methodology and begin considering

Analysis; _

Homework for 10/14:

- **Sign up for your Individual Midterm Meeting with me**
on
SignUp.com. (Sign up at this link:

<https://signup.com/go/bRcQras>)

Then, take a breather! Relax and do work for other courses.

Week 8

T 10/14

In class / Focus for the day:

Continue discussing Analysis; Peer Mentor time.

Th 10/16

In class / Focus for the day:

Continue discussing Analysis. Consider the Artistry portion of FYRE; continue FYRE work, discussions about Advising and Registration for spring. Peer Mentor time.

Homework for 10/21:

- Work on your FYRE tasks as necessary.
- **Sign up for your Individual Midterm Meeting with me** on SignUp.com. (Sign up at this link: <https://signup.com/go/bRcQras>)

Module 4—Synthesizing

Week 9

T 10/21

No Class today. Instead:

Individual Midterm Meetings with me in the Buley

Lobby.

Check-in meetings with Galileah.

Homework:

- Consider what you may want to do for the Artistry portion of your FYRE Project; continue work on FYRE. Write a couple of paragraphs that describe what you intend to create for the Artistry portion of FYRE, drop in the spot for **DB3 (due 10/28)**.

Th 10/23

No Class today. Instead:

Individual Midterm Meetings with me at Buley

Library Lobby.

Check-in meetings with Galileah.

Homework:

- Begin considering possible spring classes.
- Continue work on FYRE.
- Continue work on Engagement Requirements.

Week 10

T 10/28

Focus for the day:

VPAS Presentation on Healthy Relationships

DB 3 due.

Conclusions and Limitations: FYRE

Check-in Meetings with Galileah

Homework:

- Continue to explore options/majors/classes.
- Continue work on FYRE.

Th 10/30

Focus for the day:

Getting Ready to Register for Classes

If time: Conclusions and Limitations: FYRE

Check-in Meetings with Galileah

Homework:

- Continue to explore options/majors/classes.
- Continue work on FYRE.

Week 11

T 11/4

Focus for the day:

Sarah Keiser joins us for an Alcohol/Drug Awareness

presentation.

Work on FYRE

Prepare for Registration

Homework:

- Continue to explore options/majors/classes. Continue work on FYRE.

Th 11/6

In class / Focus for the day:

Complete work on FYRE presentations; Peer Mentor time.

Homework for 11/11:

- Continue work on FYRE.
- Finalize FYRE Poster and Presentation, due before our class period on 11/11.

Week 12

T 11/11

In class / Focus for the day:

Upload the **final revised version** of your FYRE Poster /

Presentation

Materials before class. Make sure your **FYRE Posters are submitted into Blackboard by 8:10 am today!**

FYRE Presentations.

Homework:

- Work on artistry

Th 11/13

In class / Focus for the day:**FYRE Presentations.**

- **By Noon on 11/13: Submit to Blackboard your ranked choices for FYRE projects** so that I can tabulate them. [Post ranked choices by NOON in Module 4, FYRE Assignments→Ranked List of FYRE Posters.]

Homework for 11/18:

- Work on Artistry
- **Engagement Project must be completed by 11/20**

Week 13

M 11/17

Last Day to Withdraw from Courses

T 11/18

In class / Focus for the day:

Peer Mentor time.

Homework:

Work on Artistry

Th 11/20

In class / Focus for the day:

Work on Artistry portion of FYRE;

Peer Mentor time.

Engagement Project must be completed and submitted by

Today

Homework for 11/25:

Continue work on Artistry portion of FYRE

Week 14

T 11/25

In class / Focus for the day:

- Continue your Artistry portion of the FYRE Project for next week's Community FYRE Artistry Share Meetings.

Peer Mentor Time: Review Final Exam Schedule with

Students**Homework for 12/2:**

- Work on Artistry

Th 11/28

NO CLASS. Thanksgiving Holiday

Homework for 12/2:

Artistry Finish up working your Artistry for FYRE, practice for FYRE
share days next week.

Week 15

T 12/2

In class / Focus for the day:

- Due today: Post your Artistry Description and photo in Blackboard before the beginning of our class period. [Post under Module 4→FYRE Assignments→FYRE Artistry Submission.]
- Community FYRE Artistry Share.

Th 12/4

In class / Focus for the day:

- Community FYRE Artistry Share.
- Peer Mentor time.

Week 16

Finals Week: We **will** meet during our scheduled final exam period time:

December 9, 8:00 am to 10:00 am